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Richmond Times-Dispatch

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ELECTION 2026

‘I DO’ MEETS QUESTION 2



ALLYSE PULLIAM, TIMES-DISPATCH

One audience member kisses another at the mention of marriage equality at a Monday rally in Henrico County. Virginia voters have the opportunity to pass a constitutional amendment that would remove the ban on same-sex marriage from the state constitution.

Virginia voters to decide whether to remove same-sex marriage ban from state constitution

ANNA BRYSON
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Twenty years ago, Virginia voters approved a constitutional amendment that put a ban on same-sex marriage into the state constitution. That ban remains in the state constitution, even though federal court rulings have made it unenforceable.

This Election Day, voters have the opportunity to pass a constitutional amendment that would remove the ban from the state constitution and affirm that two adults may marry regardless of sex, gender or race.

Same-sex couples have been able to marry in Virginia since 2014, following a federal court decision striking down the state's ban. The following year, the U.S. Supreme Court established a nationwide constitutional right to same-sex marriage.

Virginia already has a state law, signed by then-Gov. Glenn Youngkin in 2024, that protects same-sex marriage. But because the state constitution supersedes state law, the constitutional ban could again prevent same-sex couples from marrying in Virginia

if the Supreme Court overturns its 2015 ruling.

In 2022, the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, ending the federal constitutional right to abortion.

“This is our opportunity here in Virginia to be very proactive,” said Narissa Rahaman, executive director of Equality Virginia, Virginia's largest statewide LGBTQ+ advocacy organization. “We’ve seen in recent years, most recently 2022, that our rights guaranteed by the Supreme Court are not fully guaranteed. We’ve seen the Supreme Court revisit settled decisions, and we want to ensure that we’re doing everything we can in Virginia to protect the freedom to marry for all Virginians for generations to come.”

For Richmonders Riley and Blakely Sisk, the amendment is personal. The couple married in March 2024 and are expecting a baby in January.

They met on the dating app Bumble in 2021, when Riley lived in Richmond and

Please see MARRIAGE, Page A11



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NEXTERA-DOMINION

SCC warns credits fade, bills climb

Regulators want proof of promised savings

DAVE RESS
Richmond Times-Dispatch

The bill credits NextEra Energy and Dominion Energy promise if their merger goes through might be nice enough – but when they expire in four years’ time, Virginia ratepayers would see a sharp jump in monthly bills, regulators warn.

State Corporation Commission staff, in a report to the three decision-making commissioners, said NextEra’s \$67 billion acquisition of Dominion should be rejected unless the two firms agree to a series of tougher conditions, including limits on the dividends Dominion’s Virginia utility would pay to NextEra.

And one commitment, \$1.87 billion in bill credits over four years to Dominion’s Virginia ratepayers, won’t do much to hold down bills in the long term, staff said. Gov. Abigail Spanberger has called for credits to be tripled.

Please see DOMINION, Page A6

■ **INSIDE:** As NextEra wooed Dominion, another mystery bidder emerged. **Page A6**

DIAMOND DISTRICT

Buildout stalls, but bills will not

Ballpark delays could put taxpayers on deck

SAMUEL B. PARKER
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Those giant dirt patches next to Car-Max Park were supposed to be homes, offices and a sizable hotel by now.

Under the original plan for the development of the Diamond District, city officials told the public to expect nearly 1,300 housing units, 60,000 square feet of commercial retail space, a 180-room hotel and 1,700 parking spots by the close of Phase 1 – which was supposed to wrap up by the end of this year.

The idea, officials said, was that substantial boosts in real estate, sales and meals tax revenues generated by new business (along with annual rent

Please see BALLPARK, Page A11



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Violence flares in Paris for second consecutive weekend.

NATION & WORLD, PAGE B1

Weather

Sunny to partly cloudy
High: 69
Low: 40
Forecast: B3

A News

Lotteries

B Nation & World

Obituaries

Entertainment

C Sports

D Commentary

Puzzles

E Culture

F Marketplace

M Metro Business

X Comics

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